

A  
REPLY

TO

*John Colebatch,*

Upon his Late

PIECE,

CONCERNING

The Curing the Biting of  
a Viper by *Acids*.

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By *Charles Lenth*, Doctor of Physick.

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L O N D O N,

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# To the Reader.

**I**T is not in my Nature to treat any of the Faculty of Physick, as perhaps you may find in the following Lines, nor had I now done it, had not the Affronts offer'd upon all Societies of Learning, and Physicians, commanded it: For indeed, when all Mankind, except those that tread in his unwarrantable Paths, are blacken'd with the odious Characters of Fraud and Ignorance, in this Case what Returns cou'd be made? From those Aspersions we must either quit our selves, (and if so, I'm sure when we retort upon him, 'tis as impossible to give a true Account of the Pretender, without some Sting of Satyr, as to describe the Fury of a Lion, without describing his hideous Yells, and unmerciful Talons,) or else we must submit to his wild Notions; and if so, it's then evident we are the worst of Men, and merit not the Characters of Physicians. Wherefore to set things in their proper Light, that the true Air of the Spark may be taken to the Life, I cou'd not but intermix frequent Shadows to screen his insatiating and alluring Beams, lest these should lead us into farther Errors. But methinks he of all Persons had the

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least

## To the Reader.

*least Reason to Quarrel with Eminent and Regular Physicians, (who I doubt not may challenge equal Fame with the most Learned in the World,) that be, I say, who like a Soland Goose, can but challenge an Equivocal Generation, (for as one from the Plank, so the other dropp'd from the Mortar,) shou'd trample on Mankind, is not a vulgar Prodigy, and therefore commanded a Return accordingly. I do protest I have no personal Prejudice against him, for as yet I never saw the Man, and so could have no premeditated Quarrel: But when I saw such False and Dangerous Positions transmitted to Posterity, and the rest of my Brethren so horribly black'd, I thought it high time, in Justice to Mankind, and our own Vindication, to put a Stop to this impetuous Torrent.*

*The Doctrine of Acids hath from the Egyptians, Arabick, Grecian, German, Italian, and French Physicians, been transmitted to us as of great use in Physick, when proper Symptoms indicate, but never, till now, made a Panacea, but indeed the Cause of too many Distempers, as may be observed in the Exercitationes Quinque, lately printed at Oxford, and the ensuing Lines; wherefore I shall not recapitulate, but to those refer the Curious. As these are not writ for any other Intent, but for the true Information of Matters, to the present and succeeding Ages, if they have this Effect, it is the utmost of my Ambition; for as for my part, I would neither be cramp'd with the Do-*  
*ctrine*



## To the Reader.

*Urine of Acid, or Alkali, since a Physician that confines himself to those Two, resigns up his Liberty of Thinking, and shuts himself up in a Pinsold. The Faculty of Physick is of far greater extent; wherefore I could wish my Brethren wou'd apply themselves to the true Knowledge of Experimental Learning in all its several Branches, then they will easily see how Insufficient these Two are to explain all the Phænomena of Nature: But till this be done with the utmost Application, we cannot expect any considerable Improvement in that Faculty. But, alas! we are too prone to crowd our Heads with a Landskip of it in a voluminous Theory, take Matters upon Trust, and never examine into the true nature of Things: And whilst Matters are thus manag'd, we give too just Reasons to our Adversaries to calumniate us; for indeed only knowing Physick at this rate, is but like writing an Account of a Country by superficial Glances o'er some Map or other, and so perhaps by that Method form some unpolish'd Idea's of the Shell, but never penetrate the Kernel. I will not now trespass farther upon your Patience, but subscribe my self*

Your Humble Servant,

C. L.

To the most noted Pretender, in  
answer to those to the most unknown  
*Colebatch*, upon his several Tracts.

What! Shall we still be tortur'd with the Tool?  
A Dull, Amphibious, yet Aspiring Fool!  
Shall his ill Notions still the *Codrus* be?  
And Truth in obscure Shades still masked lie?  
Awake my Muse, and now thy Choler vent  
On him, of Nonsense but the Sediment.  
*Physick*, before thy wicked *Thesis* came  
Abroad abortive, had a glorious Name;  
But since thy four Chimera's took their Birth,  
A wild Destruction hovers o'er the Earth:  
But, Heaven be prais'd! too well we Mortals see,  
Not by Diseases, but we die by thee.  
If with thy vappy Lines we did but join,  
Sure was our Fate, as Infamy is thine.  
He like a Fool attempts the gilded Oar,  
We grasp'd at *Juno*, but a gloomy Shower  
We caught, a Cheat the like ne'er known before.  
Let then the Quack raise his Olympick Dust,  
And 'gainst *Apollo's* Sons his Venom cast:  
With Scorn they laugh but at his easie Dart,  
Nor whilst he writes he only feels the Smart.  
Thy nauseous Poet is to me unknown,  
But sure of *Grubstreet* an accomplish'd Son.  
Do then but once allow Mankind to think,  
And let *Lethaean* Streams compose the Ink  
That writ those Lines, this Happiness we have,  
We shall not then die Martyrs to the Grave.  
I'll therefore now dispatch my injur'd Muse,  
And in rough Prose the Emp'rick accuse.

Worthy

Worthy S I R,

WITH all the Tenderneſs imaginable I accoſt you, for tho' you ſtile your ſelf a Member of the College, yet ſince I find you ſuch a weak one, and ſo thoroughly before confuted, and ſince theſe laſt Squeaks you make are only with your baſſ'd Forces begging Quarter, ſhall fairly examine what you have urg'd aſreſh in this Treatiſe, and had you not again aſſerted an univerſal Regiment of *Acids*, the Owl ſhould have perch'd ſole Monarch in his Crab-Tree: Wherefore I ſhall begin with your Experiments of the Viper; but before I enter upon it, be pleas'd to let me return upon you the Expreſſion of that moſt ingenious Lady, *A. B.*

‘ That Reason was the Eternal Standard, which God Almighty, as a Ray  
‘ of

' of his own Image, hath impressed on  
 ' Man, to the election or dislike of what  
 ' may hurt or succour him, and where  
 ' this is rais'd and improv'd, makes him  
 ' an Angel; but where sunk and depress'd,  
 ' a groveling Brute.

Now, Sir, if upon Examination of the  
 whole Matter, you be forced to sink to  
 the lowest Ebb of Reason, it will then  
 from this follow, you are but the Mon-  
 key of her most ingenious Father, or that  
 long ear'd Animal that never spoke but  
 once to *Balam*.

In the first Pages of your Treatise, you  
 give us an Account of one *Philipson* that  
 was bit by a Viper, and of giving *Acids*,  
 as *Elixir Vitrioli*, in the beginning of the  
 Distemper. Now by the bye, let me tell  
 you, that if *Elixir Vitrioli* be truly pre-  
 par'd, it cannot properly be called an  
*Acid*, but rather a *Neutral Spirit*; in that  
 Preparation a *Vinous Spirit* and an *Acid*  
 being strictly united, and so consequent-  
 ly not purely an *Acid*: That which is  
 prepar'd by *Vigani*, which I take to be  
 the best I have any where seen, will scarce  
 ferment

ferment with an *Alkali*; so that the first Prescription no ways corroborates your Notion of *Acids*, tho' it is true, from a Mixture of that, and Spirit of Harts-horn, will quickly arise Clouds; and the same may be observed by holding them close together, tho' in distinct Vials; but the Motion in the Mixture of the Liquors is scarce discernible, whence it is plain the *Acid* produced not those Effects in the Bite of the Viper, by so powerfully destroying the *Alkali's*.

Your next Prescription I find to be *Elixir Vitrioli 3ij, Rectify'd Spirit of Wine two Ounces*. Now, Sir, it is most certain the Points of the *Acid* in this Prescription are so sheathed in the *Vinous Spirit*, that a greater Corrector of *Acids* cannot be thought of; for Spirit of Nitre it self we find by this Method to become a safe and good Medicine, by destroying the *Acid*: Whence it's plain, what was effected by this Medicine, cou'd not be by its *acidity*, that being destroyed before by the Mixture. Your next Prescriptions are *Infusions of Rue, Snakeweed, Angelica,*



*lica*, *Butter-bur*, &c. Which from the ancient Physicians to these very Days, have always been found to have been Alexipharmacs or Counter-poysons, and in those Cases used with success: Must therefore a little Addition of White-wine and Vinegar, which is what J. C. adds, be the Specifick? or the noble Herbs before recited? If the latter, by the same Reason I might as well argue, that if I happen'd to give an *acid* Spirit with the *Cortex* in intermitting Fevers, the Cure was not compleated by the *Cortex* but the *Acid*, which I think none but *Colebatch* will affirm; and if so, the *Acids* contributed no farther here, perhaps than to allay the Heat of the Patient; for I am pretty well satisfy'd, no Man that considers what a powerful Diaphoretick Snake-weed is, and consequently fine's the Blood, and how again *Acids* fix it, I say, no Man in his Senses that considers these things, can affirm their Virtues to consist in *acidity*, but quite contrary in *oleaginous*, *alkalious* Particles; and if so, it's plain that *Acids* little or nothing contributed  
to

to the Cure in the recited Case: For did the Virtues of these Sudorifics consist in *Acidity*, how comes it to pass? Those which are really *Acids*, as Spirit of *Vitriol*, *Sulphur*, and the vegetable *Acids*, as *Lujula*, *Berberis*, &c. are not Diaphoreticks. Since then the Virtue of the recited Herbs consists in the Evacuations they make in the milinary Glands by Sweat, it's plain what is effected by them must be by their *oleaginous* and *volatile* Particles, which may by due Preparations be prepar'd from all of them. — Since their Oils are Diaphoretical, and their *Acids*, if they have any, quite contrary, must we then because those Plants contain an *Acid* which is not Diaphoretical, and an Oil which is, conclude the Virtue of the Plant consists in the Oil or the *Acid*? If in the latter, because at the same time the *Goa Stone*, or *Bezoar*, and Juice of *Lemons* to acidulate as *Julips* are prescrib'd, does it thence follow because an *Acid* is only added to alleviate Thirst, the Cure was effected by the *Bezoardick* or the *Acids*? If with the latter,

ter, he may as well tell me because the Grand Signior constantly drinks Sherbet, and Coffee, eats all the Delicacies of the Eastern Countries, as Pine-Apples, Partridge, Mutton, Venison, &c. is not nourished by that generous Food, but with a little Vinegar which happen'd to be mix'd with the Sauce. As for my part, I neither pity nor envy J. C. For as no Emulation of him can be an Object of my Ambition, so his wilful and elaborate Ignorance cannot merit the former: With what an unparallell'd Impudence then does he brow-beat the whole Body of Physicians, and in plain Terms makes them all Knaves or ignorant Pretenders! But, God be thank'd, the World by a large Experience hath sufficiently found the contrary, which is the best Demonstration against an ignorant Pretender.

He tells in one place, he never was a Member of the University, and in that I very readily believe him; and I am sure, had he never been a Member of the College, it had added to the Honour of the Faculty of Physick. His Reasonings against Le-

*mercy*

*mery* are as rude as empty, for in the biting of Vipers it's certain there is a sudden Coagulation of the Blood; and if so, the Poison cannot proceed from Volatile, Alkalious Salts, since by a Mixture of those with the Blood, it is certain the Blood is always more fluid, and prevented from Coagulation: And if so, J. C's Notion falls to the Ground.

What then is become of that Ray of Reason God Almighty imprinted into him? I am sure, to abuse that, and transmit false Notions down to Posterity, is a Wickedness unaccountable, and deserves a severer Punishment than the Statutes of a College can inflict.

And I speak it without Prejudice, he is much fitter for a Bar than a Patient; wherefore I shall dismiss him upon this Point, and proceed to his other Particulars; and to use his own words, how Hea-then Greek may sound to him, I know not, for I think he is as much an Hea-then as a Græcian; but *Curat Lex*, would be a just Motto upon him.

' *Pag. 22.* I believe I may boldly say  
 ' it is the best and clearest Hypothesis in  
 ' Physick now Extant, and upon the  
 ' Foundation of which a Man may with  
 ' the greater Certainty attempt the Cure  
 ' of most Diseases, than upon any other  
 ' that hath yet been made publick.

If this be so, I wonder the President  
 resigns him not his Chair, since here is  
 not only a bold Defiance to that Society,  
 but to all others whatever. But the shal-  
 lowest Brooks run loudest, and the Puny  
 Mouse is the Off-spring of a Mountain.

In his Answer to Dr. *Tutbill*, *pag. 23.*  
 ' I have a greater Esteem for you than  
 ' those Scoundrels that have heretofore  
 ' appeared in Print against me.

If you esteem me one of them, I thank  
 you for your Complement, for be assured  
 it's the greatest Favour you cou'd do me,  
 for shou'd he, that upon trifling, and  
 false Notions had imposed upon all So-  
 cieties of Learning, and arrogated to  
 himself a Knowledge above all Mankind,  
 and at the same time but a meer Preten-  
 der, have treated me in another Dialect,

it



it might perhaps have call'd in Question all the little Learning I dare pretend to; for when I consider the wonderful Works of Nature, I am far from Dogmatical Assertions, but only in my own Judgment offer the most probable Conjectures.

‘ Pag. 24. And in very many Consumptive Cases it is usual for the Patient to spit up perfect Chalk, and that in great Quantities.

‘ In what Consumptive Cases? In none that I have yet met with, but the Spitting has been either Sweet, Acid, Austere, Bitter, or Putrid; none of which are Indications of Chalk: But suppose such Chalky Matter was sometimes lodg'd in the Lungs, when the Stone or Gout is concomitant, it's plain then from the Arguments before recited by Dr. Covard, and those in the *Exercitationes quinque*, that the Blood in that Case is degenerated into too Saline a Crasis, and Precipitates too great a quantity of *Alkali* from the Blood, which indeed makes a kind of Magistery. By which it is plain the Blood in those Cases abounds more

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with

with *Acid* than *Alkalious* Particles, and I am sure the truest Method in those Distempers is either by *Alkalious* or *Balsamick* Medicines.

What a Wickedness therefore must it be in *John Calbarch*, to impose such Dangerous Practice upon Mankind, which I am certain can centre in nothing but the Ruin of the Patient? For I dare Challenge him to produce one Instance, in a confirm'd Consumption, where he recover'd the Patient purely by *Acids*. How do you make out in Consumptive Persons the Sweat to be *Alkalious*? Their Tasts are manifestly Saline, their Smells frequently like those of the steams of Vinegar, which, if I am in my Senses, are no Indications of *Alkalies*, but presume Sense and Reason are as much strangers to J. C. as his Scribling to Physick and Philosophy. 'Pag. 34. He runs down *Pulv. è Chel. & Comp. & Sp. C. C.* in Malignant Fevers, and afterwards affirms, if after the Exhibition of them any thing was done, Nature it self deserves the whole Honour, nothing in the

the least being to be attributed to the  
 Medicine. In Answer to this, I averr,  
 that the last Winter I was concern'd with  
 300 Persons in Pestilential Fevers, of these  
 there were not six that dy'd, which upon  
 Occasion I can make out, and constantly  
 used the *Pulv. à Chel. Goa Stone*, and fre-  
 quently *Sp. C.C.* And surely the Reco-  
 very of so many cou'd not wholly be at-  
 tributed to Nature: I used *Acids* very  
 temperately, just to allay their Thirst,  
 but found that of themselves, without  
 the Assistance of *Alkali*, they only suffer'd  
 the Patient to sink insensibly. Which I  
 think may serve as an Answer to that  
 Point, and not let Mankind be so mise-  
 rably abus'd by such Spurious Notions.

Pag. 41, 42, 43. You assert the Life  
 of Man is a Flame, and that because  
 the *Phosphorus* is a Thing may be ob-  
 tain'd from all Animal Substances, and  
 that by stroaking the Back of a Cat in  
 the dark, multitudes of small flashes of  
 Fire will follow ones Hand.

Certainly such an Inference was never  
 made before, and if Transmigration of

Souls be true, here is the clearest Demonstration of it: So that now nothing less perhaps than the Life of a Man has taken its flight to the Cat's Back, and since so, for ought I know, the Cat, instead of Catterwauling, may Argue as well as *Colebatch*, that so freely gave Life to her Half-Moons with no less than that of a Rational Creature. By your Favour, Sir, because the *Phosphorus* can be extracted from all Animals, does it thence follow, the Life is in that? By the same Reason I may as well Argue the Life to consist in *Alkalies*, since according to your own Concessions those may be abundantly prepar'd from all Animals; and if so, what then becomes of the Doctrine of *Acids*? For then to Attack these with sharp-pointed *Acids*, wou'd be little less than Cutting of Throats. In what particularly Life consists, I presume Mankind, without blushing, may fairly own their Ignorance; but an Ignorant Pretender will attempt any thing, and prove nothing. How do you make out in a living Animal the *Phosphorus* is actually contain'd in the  
 Blood,



Blood, since from the Blood and Urine of Animals it is only prepared by Putrefaction; but this Notion I confess may help the Quaker out at a dead lift, he easily now may tell us, what he means by the Light within him. 'Pag. 51. I never cou'd see or hear of any one that hath seen any such thing as either *Ko-*  
*latile* or fixt *Alkalifere* Salt, that was any other way to be obtain'd out of Vegetable or Mineral Bodies, than from the Bodies after they had been calcin'd. And who can help invincible Ignorance? For had you consulted *Monfieur du Clos*, of the Mineral Waters in *France*, or the *Tentamen Novum* of the Mineral Waters in *Lancashire*, or the *Philosophical Transactions* Printed about Twelve Years ago, you might in all these have found a large Description of Natural *Alkalifere* Salts, that were not made by Calcination, either of Mineral or Vegetable Bodies, and so consequently not as you term them, the Excrements of Fire; but I think your self may be very well stiled *Inter Extraticos notissima fossa Cinædos*.

'Pag.



on<sup>d</sup> Pag. 52. I think it may not be amiss  
 ' to infer, that the *Alkali* to be found in  
 ' Animal Substances, is the Excrements  
 ' of their Fire.

Did ever any but a Lunatick lay down  
 such a Position? For were the *Alkali* of  
 the Blood prepared by Conflagration,  
 there must then in that, as in Plants, be  
 a total Dissolution of its whole Compa-  
 ges, and consequently there wou'd be no  
 such thing as a Living Animal. It's plain  
 the *Alkalious* Parts of the Blood are sepa-  
 rated from it by proper Glandules, for the  
 most part, as in the Liver and Reins, and  
 not prepared by Conflagration. But he  
 that can affirm such Absurdities as these,  
 may assert any thing, and may if he please  
 affirm there never was any such thing as  
 a Shadow made by the Gnomon of a Dial.  
 But Logicians tell us, *Contra Principia ne-  
 gantem non est disputandum*; wherefore  
 my Patience being quite tyr'd out in that  
 Point, I dismiss him.

Pag. 64. How do you make out, *Al-  
 kalies* make the *Serum* of the Blood Gela-  
 tinous, since in Blood-letting, by mixing  
*Alkalies*.

*Alkalies* with the Blood, we observe it to be made more fluid, which cou'd not be, did *Alkalies* turn the Blood to a Gelly? In Pag. 70. How does it appear it is the *Acid* part of the Sulphur that ferments with an *Acid*, but rather the *Oleaginous* Particles, since were it the former, Spirit of Sulphur wou'd ferment with Spirit of Sulphur, which is both false and absurd; and a true Brat of *Colebatch's* Genius. If it is not the *Acid* of the Sulphur that ferments with the *Acid*, what you offer is trifling and ridiculous, and no Answer at all to Dr. *Tatbill's* Objection. Nor do you any ways make it appear the Virtues of Bitters consist in an *Acid*, which till you fairly do, you still stand charg'd with those Objections: Bitterness in Plants I don't apprehend to consist either in a predominancy of *Alkali* or *Acid*, but in a particular Mixture of different Bodies, which by Calcination, or Distillation is destroy'd, so that no Preparation from a bitter Plant will by any such Method, (*viz.*) Distillation or Calcination, ever answer the Virtue of the Vegetable; so that what he alledges

alleges in relation to the *Acids* of *Bitters*, is nothing to the Matter.

*Guaicum*, *Sassafras*, and *Bitters*, you assert to be envelop'd *Acids*; but pray if it be in you Nature to think, is it by the *Acids* in these, the Scurvy, Inflammatory, and Venereal Distempers are cur'd, or by their *Terebinthinate* and *Balsamick* Particles.

To affirm the former, you may with the same parity of Reason affirm, *Mercurius Duls* not by its Saline Particles makes that Alteration in the Mass of Blood, which no Man I suppose will Assert that understands the Nature of Sublimate; but indeed the Saline Particles being sheath'd in the Mercurial ones, they by that means become a safe Medicine, and by their obtunded Points may help to incise the Viscid Humours, and by that means make room for the Mercurial Particles united with them; but then the Cure is not to be attributed to the *Acids* as such, but the *Alkaline* Particles conjoyn'd: So that if it is this you mean by your envelop'd *Acids*, you may as well tell me a  
Wound

Wound may be as easily made by the Sword in the Scabbard, as what Cures you attributed to envelop'd *Acids*, were effected by their *Acidity*, but indeed quite contrary by their *Balsamick Particles*.

Pray, Sir, in *Diarrhea's*, where a Person in Twenty Four hours, will sometimes have an Hundred Stools, with intolerable Gripes, and the Faces frequently clear, green, or viscid; I would gladly know whether those Humours are more highly saturated with *Acids* or *Alkalies*. If with the latter, how comes it to pass, that in the *West-Indies*, where that Distemper is most frequent, Chalk is found to be a certain Specifick? In the like Case, the Honourable Mr. Boyle, highly applauds *Lapis Calaminaris*, which is a most Potent *Alkali*. Now in these Cases were the Blood so highly saturated with *Alkalies* as you mention, the giving of these wou'd be only to add Oyl to a Flame, and raise the Distemper the higher; but the quite contrary Effects are found from them: Wherefore once more scratch your Abortive Noddle, and give a full Answer to these two Instances.

What Physician of Note ever rejected the prudent use of *Acids*? But what makes that to Illustrate our Hypothesis? Were the Cures perfected by *Acids*? If not, as I'm sure they were not, what you urge is impertinent.

‘ Pag.

‘ *Pag. 86, 86. Bittern is the most Corroding  
fixt Alkali in Nature.*

Under Favour, Sir, you are mistaken, for were it so great an *Alkali*, it wou’d ferment with any *Acid*, but will not with any but *Oyl of Vitriol*; and if so, it is not so great an *Alkali* as you make it. Till you Answer the Arguments alledg’d by *Dr. Coward* and my self against you, for my part, I think not my self oblig’d to take any further notice of your undigested Scribble, but to give a full and clear Answer to those Arguments, Challenge you and your whole Party, otherwise I think it much safer to Practice upon Establish’d Principles, than the Enthusiastick Notions of a Rambling Empirick.

Sir, with a little loss of Time, I have given you a Reply to your last Performances, and tremble to think of your designed Treatise of Fevers; you have had already sufficient Revenge upon the Thinking part of Mankind: VVherefore, good Sir, Murder us not afresh, but if you have any Grains of Compassion, stop your Hand, and as you are Stout, be Merciful, lest by your Erecting these Castles in the Air, you give the VVorld too just Reason to wish the same Punishment may be inflicted upon you, as one of the *Russian* Emperors did upon an Engineer, who because he had built such an awkward Fortress, order’d both his Eyes to be pull’d out, that neither he himself might make, nor direct others to do the like.

